

M E M O



Date: September 21, 2000
To: Mayor and Council
From: Councillor Graham Anderson
Re: **NOTICE OF MOTION - Autism Treatment**

Moved by _____ Councillor Anderson

Seconded by _____

Background

Autism is a developmental disability characterized by severe delays in language and social development which may affect up to 1 in 500 children.

A highly effective early intervention therapy exists ('Lovaas Applied Behavioural Analysis') but it is not currently covered under the Medical Services Plan and the provincial government has steadfastly denied funding. This same therapy has been fully funded in Alberta for several years.

In 1998 an emergency resolution was endorsed at the UBCM annual convention by the District of North Vancouver, urging the government to fund Lovaas ABA therapy. The resolution was adopted.

In a recent court case between parents of autistic children and the provincial Ministry of Health, the Supreme Court of British Columbia ruled that the therapy is 'medically necessary treatment' which must be provided by the Ministry of Health, and further ruled that the government had discriminated against autistic children.

This judgement has been appealed by the Ministry of Health, a process that may take months, if not years, to unfold in the Supreme Court of Canada. In the meantime, autistic children continue to miss their opportunity to receive treatment during those critical early years.

Motion

The following is a notice of motion by Councillor Anderson:

"THAT a letter be written to the Minister of Health strongly urging that Lovaas ABA therapy be funded for autistic children immediately, or at least in the interim until the Supreme Court Appeal ruling is made, and further that the letter be copied to UBCM, FCM, and all individual B.C. municipalities with a request for support."

GA:ml

*Resolution passed unanimously at
Regular meeting of Sept 25/00.*